

AMARYLLIS.

An Explanation That Reconciled the Sweethearts.

By MARTHA M'C. WILLIAMS.

Outside it was raw and gusty, with white, high lying clouds scudding so thickly across a pale sky that only wan and watery sunshine strained through the breaks between. Inside there was the balm of May, especially in the south parlor, where I knew I should find Myrtille.

Myrtille is tall and twenty, with a child's foot and a turn of the head and neck that would become an empress. She has coral red lips, a fine, straight nose, olive skin, dark almond eyes, heavily lashed and lidded, and a low, straight brow, deeply shadowed by dusky flax hair. In virtue of all this she reigns as a queen over most men. We had been engaged until two weeks ago—to be exact, until the date of the Verneux ball and the episode of the Granley girl.

The ball is ancient history now. Besides, it has really nothing to do with the case. I left off dancing with the Granley girl at 4 a. m. to fling myself into tweeds and set forth upon a week's journey. Coming home from it, I found my table cluttered with my letters to Myrtille—those of the most fragmentary note—those of the last week unopened—my ring, my books, a bracelet or two, the locket with my picture and a litter of those idiotic things one sends at Christmas and Easter and on birthdays. It was this litter that saved me from utter despair. I reasoned that if Myrtille had cared enough for me to keep it all this time she could not give up caring for me in a moment.

Still, I knew there was a tough job ahead. But I did not dream she would go to the length of refusing to see or hear me or even to listen to my side of the case through Aunt Bob, most tactful of intermediaries. Her people backed her, too—all but Dicky. Dicky is fifteen and owns the distinction of being the only child in trousers. Myrtille has found herself unable to subjugate. I cannot flatter myself that Dicky's advocacy of my cause was wholly disinterested. Dicky has a fine taste in better pupes and a relish for stolen glances on my hunters. At home he is allowed nothing more hazardous than a steady going job. However that may be, it meant a lot to have any sort of friend at court. Otherwise how should the hall door have swung open at my approach? The servants had strict orders to shut it civilly in my face.

"She's in there. It beats me why you want her, why you want any girl, when you've got heaps of dolls and jewels," Dicky said, grinning as I shot past him. "She's been real hateful to me, no good for even a fight this whole week." Dicky's voice pursued me down the hall.

The south parlor is a square jut, open upon three sides to the sun, with walls more than half windows, iron barred outside and full of green growing things within. There is a big fireplace.

Myrtille stood in front of it, her eyes intently fixed upon the smoldering logs. At my entrance she started over so little, turned her head the least bit and kept on staring in the fire.

"Myrtille," I ventured irresolutely, "my hand still on the doorknob."

She sat down, and took up her embroidery, her face still further averted. Then I knew I had won half a point. If she had been as angry as she believed herself to be she would have marched away with her nose in the air.

I began again formally, "Miss Grey," but stopped short. She had begun to whistle over her work softly, meditatively, as though she knew herself to be alone.

Something happened then. I am neither poet nor romancer, but my ringing eye saw in the south window a creature of tropic charm, slim and tall, green gowned as a wood nymph, with wonderful golden tawny eyes and a crown still more wonderfully red. As I went to her she shivered and set all her green gown fluttering defiantly, but I paid no heed to it, only said joyously, baring my head:

"Amaryllis! You are a real godsend. I was never so glad to see any one in all my life."

Myrtille's head came around so that I saw her profile out of the tail of my eye. I fancied she stared, but dared not make sure of it. My wood nymph barely nodded; her tremors were all at rest. I bent toward her low enough to look into her golden tawny eyes and ran on:

"What have you done to yourself? You are so beautiful, so strangely, so rarely beautiful. It makes me despair that I did not keep my heart for

you, or, rather, it would make me desperate if hearts were things that could be given or kept at will."

Certainly the wood nymph stared. The golden tawny eyes looked at me unblinking. Myrtille's head had turned a little more. Her lips were the least bit parted, as though her breath came hard. I straightened and stuck a hand in my pocket as I added:

"The pity of it! There's a true heart gone to waste! True hearts are none so plenty, Amaryllis."

"Certainly they are not," came scornfully from the fireside. I affected not to hear and went on manfully:

"I've played and lost—lost so miserably. Listen—then tell me if you think I quite deserve what I am getting."

"I am going away," came faintly from Myrtille's chair, but Myrtille herself sat still and even made a pretense of putting stitches into her work. Finding me silent through a long minute, she sat very straight and added:

"Naturally one is nervous at finding oneself alone with a lunatic. Only lunatics talk to things as though they were people."

"Don't mind her, Amaryllis," I said softly. "Poor creature, she is jealous. She thinks you are no more than a lily blooming in a pot. We know better, of course."

"Really I did not dream you had so much imagination," Myrtille said outright, snipping her thread as she spoke. I stared harder than ever at Amaryllis, saying: "Imagination is a fearful thing sometimes. I am glad, Amaryllis, you altogether lack it. You would never see in ordinary civilities to a pretty girl anything to turn your lovely golden tawny eyes green."

"Dancing or sitting out every other number, I suppose, comes under the head of ordinary civilities," Myrtille said, her lip curling.

I kept on quietly: "And even if you felt hurt you would let me explain. The Verneux have hearts as big as their fortune. Thus it happens I owe them what money can never pay. Not so many years back there was a big flurry in the street that put my governor in the worst sort of hole. It needed a cool million to get him out, and a Verneux million did it. Yet the governor was hardly an acquaintance. Verneux learned his extremity by chance and came to his help because, as he phrased it, he didn't think the other side was putting up a square deal. It does not lessen the obligation that he got his million back, plus a good profit. Eventually the Granley girl will have it with several millions more. She is a granddaughter—unacknowledged because Miss Verneux wishes to seem as young as their fortune—but the very apple of the Verneux eye. They wanted her to be the belle of the ball. She was shy and sensitive and frightened half out of her wits. Somehow she trusted me."

"I don't at all wonder at that," said a voice from the fireplace.

I bowed gravely and resumed: "When she is not frightened she is pretty, Amaryllis. Her head is splendidly red—not quite so red as yours. She is light on her feet, too, and loves to dance as well as the flowers do. The trouble is she has not yet quite caught the rhythm she must move to, so needs must lean heavily upon her partner. I understood some of the others did not. Occasionally one was flurried, still more occasionally one impermanent. And a single cad let her see he was ashamed of dancing with her in spite of the millions. At her first ball—think of it! I had to take away the sting of it somehow. Perhaps I did seem devoted, but she didn't understand. I told her about Myrtille in our very first waltz."

A little inarticulate cry from the fireplace. Covertly I saw tears on Myrtille's cheeks. She made as though to rise, but sank back, turned away her head and resumed the furious stabbing with her needle. I gathered the greenery of Amaryllis in my hands, laid my cheek against it and said dreamily:

"Amaryllis, tell me why I am fated to love dusky hair. All the painters and poets agree that red is ever so much more beautiful."

"Are you sure, quite sure, you do love it?" Myrtille asked tremulously. She was not answered in words.

Five minutes later Dicky, bursting in upon us, found us side by side, looking down at Amaryllis through sunshine grown suddenly and magically warm and golden. After a long look Dicky whistled, turned on his heel and said from the door over his shoulder: "So you two have made it up. McSkiffers said you would 'cause that red lily bloomed so far ahead of time. But I don't care about that. All I want is to know what you're going to give me when you get married."

Bewit—That rich old fool wouldn't let me marry his daughter. Jewett—Well, he may be rich and old, but he's no fool.—New York Times.

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Secretary Meyer Tells House Committee His Plans for Making the United States the First Sea Power.

Washington, Feb. 28.—If present plans go through, Congress at its next session will authorize the construction of the greatest battleship the world has ever seen, a monster of not less than 32,000 tons displacement, equipped with broadside batteries of 14-inch guns of the new type.

At an executive session of the House naval committee Saturday, with even the official stenographer barred, Secretary of the Navy Meyer discussed freely and frankly his plans for making the United States the first sea power of the world. Were it not for the fact that the navy department is still conducting its experiments with the new type of 14-inch gun, the secretary would have asked that the two battleships that will probably be authorized by the committee this year be made 28,000, or even 30,000-ton vessels, instead of 27,000, which will be the figure. But it only remains for the new gun to be demonstrated a success under all conditions, which is thought to be practically assured, for the navy department to begin preparing the plans for the most powerful battleship in the world.

"The House committee on naval affairs is making ready for this big vessel and others of its type. The naval appropriation bill soon to be reported to the House will contain items aggregating several millions for the enlargement of the three great dry docks now under construction, so that they will be capable of holding vessels much larger than any that are thought of at this time.

"The United States," said a member of the committee, who for very obvious reasons does not care to have his name used, "will no longer follow in the footsteps of foreign powers in construction matters. In a couple of years we will be leading the world. The tonnage of the great battleship now under consideration will depend of course on the increasing tonnage due to the terrifically heavy batteries of the new type of 14-inch gun, but will be not less than 32,000 tons and possibly more. Our naval constructors not so many years ago declared that in the 10,000-ton ship battleship building had reached its limit. Now, with 27,000-ton ships about to be authorized by Congress and a 32,000-ton ship in prospect, it is difficult to say what the limit will be."

It is estimated that a vessel of the immense size and type suggested will cost not less than \$18,000,000.

At the meeting of the naval committee yesterday, although no vote was taken, it was tentatively agreed to recommend Secretary Meyer's proposition of naval increase as follows:

Two 27,000-ton battleships, which will be equipped with either ten 14-inch or twelve 12-inch guns; one repair ship, two colliers and five submarines.

The submarines are for the protection of the Pacific coast. The Pacific coast Congress delegation appeared before the committee some weeks ago to make a plea for submarines and made a strong impression on the committee. This, coupled with recommendation of Secretary Meyer, has resulted in the committee not only making provision for five submarines in the naval bill of this year, but practically reaching an agreement on a tentative submarine increase plan, by which the Pacific coast is to get additional submarines each year, beginning with possibly ten in the next bill, until it is considered that the entire Pacific coast is adequately protected against possible invasion.

The naval appropriation bill this year will carry \$8,000,000 or \$10,000,000 less than the measure of last year, in which there were some abnormal expenditures provided for, and which aggregated more than \$120,000,000.

FIRST OF HER SEX TO SIT ON U. S. SUPREME BENCH

Henrietta Wells, Age 4, Lifted to His Knee by Her Grandfather, Justice Brewer.

Washington, Feb. 28.—To Miss Henrietta Wells of Boston, belongs the honor of being the first of her sex to sit among the jurists of the highest tribunal in the land.

Miss Henrietta did not occupy one of the big leather-covered chairs, she chose a cozier spot—on the knee of Justice David J. Brewer, her grandfather. Nervous, Miss Henrietta, aged four, one day may be able to tell her own grandchildren that she once occupied a seat on the supreme bench of the United States, and that as an honor that in 120 years had never before been accorded to a lady.

Miss Henrietta with her mother paid a visit to the court. Her grandfather, in all the dignity of his black robes, went down among the spectators and chatted with his daughter. When he resumed his seat he found that the little granddaughter had trailed softly along behind.

Justice Brewer lifted her to his knee and Justice Marlan, who sits next him, fished in his pocket for some trinket with which to entertain the baby visitor. He found a rubber band. This he presented to Henrietta, who promptly snapped it against her august grandfather's nose, after which she was lifted from the woolsack by the dignified marshal of the court and carried back to her mother.

BELMONT-ROBSON WEDDING.

Millionaire and Actress Are Married at New York.

New York, Feb. 28.—August Belmont, sr., the banker and millionaire race horse owner, and Miss Eleanor Robson were married at 5 o'clock Saturday afternoon at New York in Miss Robson's house. At the recent announcement of their engagement it was said that the marriage would not take place until some time in March. It became known Saturday that Mr. Belmont and Miss Robson had appeared last Friday night at the city hall in New York and taken out a marriage license, avoiding, by the lateness of the hour, the scrutiny of the curfew.

There were no bridesmaids or ushers, and the list of guests were slowly reviewed to the immediate family and intimate friends. The bride was given away by her cousin, Charles Robinson Smith, and Arthur Lithgow Devens of Boston, Mr. Belmont's classmate at Harvard, was best man. Immediately after the ceremony Mr. and Mrs. Belmont left for a trip through the south. In March they will sail for the Mediterranean.

Mr. Belmont was a widower and is 67 years old. His wife died in Paris in 1898, and they had three sons—August, Jr., admitted this year into the banking firm of August Belmont & Co.; Raymond, recently graduated from Harvard, and now a clerk in his father's banking-house; and Morgan, still at an eastern preparatory school. Miss Robson gave her age in taking out the marriage license as 31.

Worried Over Taft's Health.

Washington, Feb. 28.—President Taft's principal worry just now is said to concern his friends, who are worrying about his health. Yesterday the president took a four-mile walk with Captain Archibald J. Butt, his military aide, after a strenuous day's work, and when he returned to the White House he said that he felt much better for the exhilaration.

GOSSIP FROM THE CAPITAL

Mr. Pinchot and His Press Bureau

NOT EDIFYING SPECTACLE

More Trouble for the Interstate Commerce Court—The President on the Navy Personnel.

Washington, Feb. 28.—Gifford Pinchot was no more, no less Pinchot Saturday, as he took his place as the witness stand in the Ballinger-Pinchot inquiry. There was the usual flourish of trumpets with which he does all things; the same delight to figure in the limelight; the same dramatic appeal to the public to forestall judgment.

The statement by the former forester with which he anticipated his testimony was, it was thought, in very poor taste, inasmuch as the body he was appearing before was a quasi-court; but the affair would not have smacked of Pinchotism if it had not been prefaced with typewritten statements furnished to the press beforehand and according to the most approved manner of the press agent. Mr. Pinchot, it was felt, had undertaken to prove much when he exclaimed that the secretary of the interior was the falsifier he asserted him to be, one who had deceived the president and the public regarding his sentiment on conservation, one in whose hands it was unsafe and one whose instant purpose, when he became secretary of the interior, was to upset the existing policy of the department concerning conservation.

"The country will demand of this committee," he cried in conclusion, "a verdict in harmony with the general conviction that the secretary of the interior has been unfaithful to the public, whose property he had endangered, and to the president, whom he has deceived." What an appeal! But the committee is to act on testimony and not on general opinion, and if Pinchot falls short of his apparently too fulsome and too general statement, if he is laughed out of court and worse, he is himself to blame.

The intense rhetoric is thought illuminative of the character of the man and explanatory of his vindictive pursuit of the secretary. It was noticed that he did not make his statement under oath. His testimony was so given, however. It was uttered in a self-contained manner and in short and terse sentences. He did not ramble, as have preceding witnesses, but it is thought, for all that, that he will be on the witness stand for some considerable time.

The room of the hearings was crowded to suffocation. They should be held in a theatre, for Pinchot and Glavis are

quite a matinee entertainment. Society has crowded to hear them.

In the evening, the Pinchot press agency distributed to the newspapers its own account of the day's proceedings, beginning, "Mr. Pinchot's testimony conclusively showed that Secretary Ballinger had deceived the president," etc. It is a brazen machine, this Pinchot press agency.

It appears likely that the interstate commerce bill to be reported to the House from the interstate commerce committee is not to contain the interstate commerce court on which President Taft insists. A majority of the committee, it is now learned, is opposed to it.

Of course the Democrats in the main object to the court, and Republican opponents of it embrace such stout members as the chairman of the committee, Representative Mann, and Representative Stevens of Minnesota. If the bill to be reported contains the court, the fact will be a fine tribute to the persuasive powers of Mr. Taft's smile or his big stick.

A message of essential interest, but not likely to make such an impression in Congress as to provoke the necessary legislation, was that sent by President Taft to Congress Saturday. Only the House was in session to receive it. The navy thoroughly needs that improvement in its personnel, the message recommends strongly, but to that sort of thing Congress is loth to respond. More battleships or fewer of them touch a more responsive chord in the servants of the people. Yet how these battleships are to be manned effectively is a very important problem, but always refused solution by Congress. So it was not surprising that the message was listened to with no intense interest and by few representatives.

The day otherwise was devoted to the delivery of eulogies commemorative of Gen. Lew Wallace, whose statue in Statuary hall was accepted by the House. It was all as dreary and neglected as when eulogies are recited in memory of dead members of Congress. Consideration of the post office appropriation bill followed.

ARRESTS IN VAUGHN CASE.

Widow and Dr. James R. Hall Are Charged with Murder.

Kirkville, Mo., Feb. 28.—Warrants issued by the Adair county circuit court at Kirkville, Mo., on a report of a special grand jury resulted in the arrest Saturday of Mrs. Alma Proctor Vaughn and Dr. James R. Hall of Monroe City, Mo., on the charge of the murder by strychnine poisoning of Prof. John T. Vaughn.

Mrs. Vaughn, released on a \$25,000 bond, returned to Monroe City to await a hearing, which probably will be in May. Dr. Hall is guarded at his home. He is under bond of \$7500 on a justice of the peace warrant.

A joint indictment charging Mrs. Vaughn and Dr. Hall with the murder of Prof. Vaughn was entered on the court records at Kirkville, Mo., Saturday. It has been suppressed until both were arrested.

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LIBERALS IN SORE STRAITS

Sentiment Exists That it Would be Well to Have

THE GOVERNMENT FALL

The Liberals Are Angry at the Nationalists—John Redmond's Attitude May Cause the Ministry to Fall.

London, Feb. 28.—Interest in the political crisis at London centers in the premier's audience with the king and the prolonged cabinet council, which are generally considered to herald a profound change in the policy of the government. It is authoritatively stated that the prime minister conveyed to the king, and afterward to his colleagues, his belief in the impossibility of proceeding with the proposals for the reconstruction of the House of Lords, and in the necessity of concentrating all forces on the veto question.

Although several members of the cabinet strongly favor reconstruction, it is not believed that a split will result, but the attitude of the extreme Radicals and Nationalists is disquieting. It was thought that the motion of Sir James H. Dalziel, the Radical, disapproving any government resolutions aiming at reform, would be tried out, but Sir James has submitted the motion to the speaker and secured the certainty of its discussion, after slight alterations were made. There are persistent rumors from Dublin that the government will be defeated. William O'Brien in a published article declares that John E. Redmond, leader of the Nationalists, is disgusted to find that Mr. O'Brien's views on the budget were right, and has now decided to seize an earlier opportunity than that which the budget affords of ending the government's existence.

There is a possibility that the cabinet on Monday may be defeated by a combination of the Nationalists and a section of the Radicals. The idea of the government retaining office by the help of the Conservatives is repugnant to all sections among the Liberals. The organ of the moderate Liberals, the Westminster Gazette, appealing for fair play, says: "It would be better for the government to go than to live miserably and discredited, as it has been up to the present. It is assumed that the Conservatives will support the government at this stage with a view to securing appropriations, but the latest indications are that the rank and file cannot resist the temptation of defeating and discrediting the government at an early opportunity."

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